Shape Up For Life

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Upcoming Events

Shape Up For Life
Shape Up For Life is a 6-week health and wellness class that will enable participants to develop healthy lifestyles and become more physically active. Educational components will focus on health and exercise tips, dietary considerations, chronic disease prevention, and healthy meal preparation and tasting. The physical activity will consist of walking. This class will be conducted April 16, 23, 30, May 7, 14, and 21, 2007 from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the New Hanover County Cooperative Extension Center. The registration fee is $25.00 per person for all classes. The deadline to register is April 12th. If you have questions or want to register, call 910-798-7660.

Master Gardener Plant Sale
Master Gardener plant sale will be conducted April 12 & 13, (9:00 am to 5:00 pm) and April 14, 2007 (9:00 am to 12:00 noon). The sale will begin again May 10 & 11, 2007 (9:00 am to 5:00 pm) and May 12, 2007 (9:00 am to 12:00 noon). For more information, contact Brunswick County Cooperative Extension Center at 910-253-2610.

Storytelling
A storytelling event will be conducted at the New Hanover County Cooperative Extension Center, May 19th, from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm by professional storytellers. There will be an opportunity for you to tell your own story. For more details, contact Aimee Allen, 4-H Agent at 910-798-7679.

Fruits & Veggies---More Matters

What is Fruits & Veggies---More Matters?
Fruits & Veggies---More Matters is a new national health initiative created to encourage Americans to eat more fruits and vegetables in all forms (fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and 100% fruit juice). This initiative will replace the 5 A Day health initiative and it was launched March 19, 2007 with different programs, events, and activities on a national, state, and local level.

Why is it important to increase fruit and vegetable consumption?
The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 establishes a range in the amount of fruits and vegetables consumers should consume each day depending on their age, sex, and activity level. The focus is no longer on a specific number of servings.

Eating more fruits and vegetables instead of high-fat foods makes a difference in maintaining a healthy weight. A variety of colorful fruits and vegetables are great sources of many vitamins, minerals, and natural substances that may help protect us from chronic diseases including stroke, certain kinds of cancer; and heart disease.

North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation.
How can fruit and vegetable consumption be increased?

T. Try new vegetables when you cook, or eat out, and purchase new or unfamiliar vegetables when you shop. Try preparing vegetables in a variety of ways (steaming, stir frying, sautéing, boiling, grilling) and try different types of recipes.

A. Eat all forms of fruits and vegetables (fresh, canned, frozen, dried, and 100% fruit juice). All forms matter.

S. Snack smart. Fruits and vegetables make tasty healthy snacks. Shop smart; buy fresh fruits and vegetables when they are in season.

T. Take charge. Ask for fruits and vegetables for meals and snacks. Include kids in cooking and shopping.

E. Explore the variety of fruits and vegetables in all colors. Visit www.MyPyramid.gov

Fruits & Veggies--More Matters will be seen in stores, online, at home, and on packaging. The new consumer website www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org will offer recipes, serving ideas, and shopping advice. It will include activities and tips for getting children involved and exploring the different varieties of fruits and vegetables that the whole family loves to eat. Consumers will have the opportunity to share their own easy, fun ideas by submitting them online. Below you will find an approved Fruit & Veggie---More Matters recipe:

Greek Style Garbanzo Salad

1 ½ cups cooked (1/2 cup dry) or 1 can garbanzo beans, drained
½ cup thinly sliced onion
½ cup diced tomato
½ cup chopped green pepper
3 tablespoons rice vinegar or apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 teaspoons olive oil
2 tablespoons minced garlic
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Let marinate in the refrigerator for several hours. Yield: 5 servings.

Common Food Myths

Skipping breakfast is a good way to save calories and lose weight. False. Breakfast is one of the most important meals for your metabolism. Metabolism is the rate at which you burn calories or energy from food. When breakfast is skipped, your body will actually begin to conserve the calories and shift into “starvation mode” where the metabolic rate is decreased. Always remember to eat breakfast, if possible within 1-2 hours of waking.

Eating carbohydrates will make you fat. False. Carbohydrates supply 4 calories per gram and fat sources provide 9 calories per gram. Carbohydrates are the main source of fuel for the body and brain and therefore at least 50% of your calories should come from these sources. Complex carbohydrates, which consist of high fiber grains, starchy vegetables, beans and fruit, should be the majority of your carbohydrate intake. Limit the refined carbohydrates in your diet, such as white breads, snack foods, cakes, cookies, etc., as these types of foods do not supply you with much nutritional benefit and are calorie dense.
It takes a lot of time to eat healthy. **False.** Planning is the key to a healthy, well-balanced diet. Prepare dishes ahead and freeze. Make homemade mixes. Some mixes can be used for several kinds of dishes. Pre- prep foods ahead of time (chop, precook, peel, slice, and store in the refrigerator or freezer until ready for use). Select quick and easy dishes to prepare. Utilize leftovers in other dishes as the need arises. For example, meats prepared for one meal can be used in soup for another meal. Small steps every day can lead to a healthier you.

**Fad Diets**

Fad diets may help you to lose weight for a short period. However, the most effective long-term way to achieve a healthful lifestyle is to be 100% fad free. This can be achieved by practicing the following tips:

**Develop an eating plan for lifelong health.** Too often people adopt the latest food fad rather than focusing on overall health. Get back to basics and use the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans and My Pyramid as your guide to healthy eating.

**Choose foods sensibly by looking at the big picture.** A single food or meal will not make or break a healthful diet. When consumed in moderation in appropriate portions, all foods can fit a healthful diet.

Learn how to spot a food fad. Unreasonable or exaggerated claims that eating (or not eating) specific foods, nutrient supplements or combinations of foods may cure disease or offer quick weight loss are key features of fad diets.

**Find your balance between food and physical activity.** Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness and it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being, and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

**Food and nutrition misinformation can have harmful effects on your health and well-being as well as your diet.** Registered dietitians are uniquely qualified to communicate current emerging science-based nutrition information and are an instrumental part of developing a diet plan that meets your individual needs.

**Strength Training**

Before starting any physical activity regimen, consult your physician. Strength training may be dangerous if performed improperly or without proper supervision. Start slowly, increase both repetitions and weight with time. Start with weight resistance that is too easy rather than too hard. Choose resistance or weights that make you tired at the end of a particular set of repetitions. You should not experience pain. Strength training can be done at home with simple equipment such as free weights and stretch bands. Other appropriate equipment includes dumbbells and weight machines.

The Mayo Clinic reports the following benefits from regular strength training:

**Builds strong bones** - Strength training increases bone density and decreases your risk of osteoporosis. When bone is stressed appropriately through muscle movement, it gets stronger.

**Controls body fat** - As you lose muscle, your body becomes less efficient at burning calories, which can result in weight gain. The more muscle mass you have, the more quickly and efficiently your body burns calories. This makes it easier for you to control your weight.

**Reduces risk of injury** - Building muscle protects your joints from injury during aerobic exercise and normal daily activity. For instance, strength-training exercises that develop the muscles in your back and abdomen help protect your lower back and keep it strong and healthy.

**Improves sense of well-being** - Strength training may give you more self-confidence and improve your overall body image.

**Helps improve ability for sound sleep** - Engaging in physical activity on a regular basis can improve the quality of sleep.
**QUESTION:** Some schools are encouraging children to drink more water and so parents are buying bottled water for their child(ren) to take to school. Can these bottles be refilled with tap water? Many families cannot afford to continue to buy bottled water and others are concerned about putting so many empty bottles into landfills.

**ANSWER:** The bottles can be refilled. After the bottle is completely emptied of water, rinse the bottle with water (partially fill the bottle with tap water, cap it, shake, and then empty) before refilling with fresh tap water. Hot soapy water should NOT be used because it is very difficult to remove the entire soap residue from this type of bottle. However, if one wants to, they can scrub the opening and exterior of the bottle with soapy water. Just be certain not to get soap into the interior of the bottle. Harmful organisms are most likely going to contaminate the outer areas of the bottle rather than the interior of the bottle.

Furthermore, do not immerse these bottles into a sanitizing solution (chlorine bleach and water) because the chlorine could be absorbed into the plastic. Technically these bottles are classified as single-use and so were not designed to withstand repeated washing with soap and sanitizing with chemicals. The plastic that is used to construct these bottles might have a greater likelihood of absorbing chemicals than bottles designed for multiple uses. These bottles also should not be placed in boiling water (another means of sanitizing food-contact surfaces) as they might melt.

At present there are no clear guidelines for how many times one can refill the bottle. Therefore, as a best practice, it is recommended that bottles can be reused for up to one week. If the bottle were to be used for longer than that, it would be best to purchase a multi-use bottle (i.e. Rubbermaid or Tupperware type containers). In fact, from an economic and environmental perspective it would be best to recommend that all students use multi-use bottles rather than bottled water. One can purchase multi-use bottles at most grocery stores and discount outlets for about $1.00. Multi-use bottles can be washed, rinsed, and sanitized between uses.

Also, remind children to not share water from the same bottle. This is a very effective way to spread disease. Furthermore, the bottle should be kept capped between uses so as not to contaminate the water with contaminants from the environment.

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